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VERVET MONKEY FOUNDATION

REHABILITATION • EDUCATION • SANCTUARY



Django

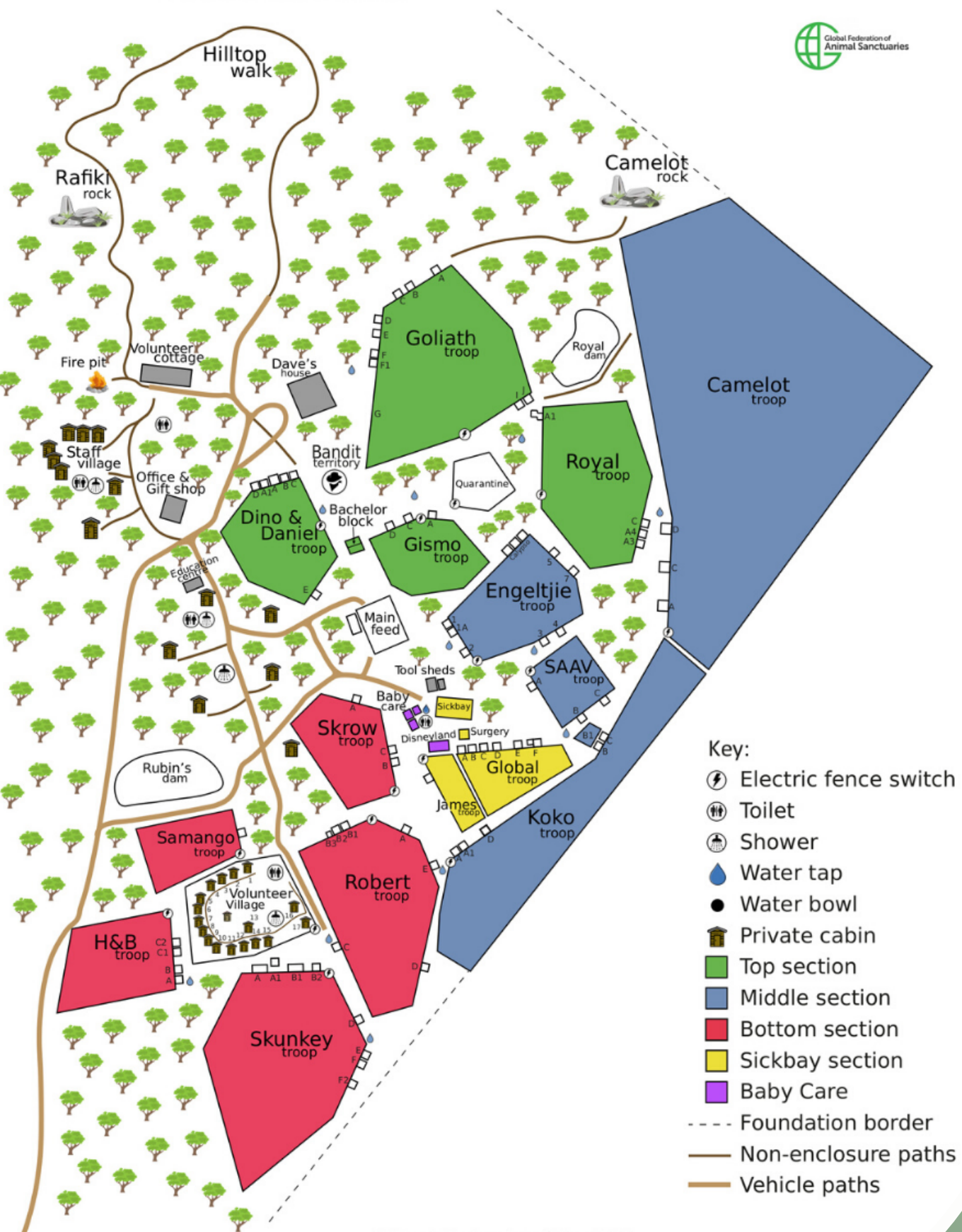
Vervet Monkey Foundation

Annual report 2019



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Introduction

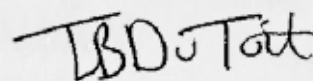
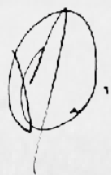
2019 was a year of raising the VMF profile using various forms of media, creating more international and local awareness in addition to improving and constructing new enclosures for the well-being of the monkeys.

The new JALamango samango enclosure, Calypso's Corner (the new blind enclosure) and Sickbay enclosure extension were all completed. The largest number of VMF Europe events were held in one year and the number of visitors to the sanctuary has also increased by far which in turn helps educate and bring more volunteers in.

All the goals set for the year were achieved with the exception of Main Feed area which will be completed next year. The target for the number of hectares for the Vervet Forest may have been a little optimistic in conjunction with ensuring the rest of the VMF goals were met. Unexpected events such as the tragic loss of some of the monkeys on the day of the abnormal heatwave changed our priorities and focus but with thanks to funds awarded by IPPL at the end of the year, we were able to put a borehole for additional water on site for the first time.

A huge thank you to our local and voluntary team who have really been committed to help the VMF evolve and keep the standards of care high. Our donors, fundraisers and supporters we appreciate every single one of you who have made a big difference to the monkeys this year.

Signed



Dave Du Toit (Founder, Director) & Josie Du Toit (Director, Rehabilitator)

Management team



Arrivals

In 2019, we welcomed 33 new arrivals to the VMF (7 less than the year before), many of whom required specialised care:

- 27 vervet orphans (3 of which were road accident victims, 1 was bitten by a dog, 3 whose mothers were shot by farmers and 1 blind baby)
- 1 partially sighted juvenile vervet (Leelo)
- 4 wild juveniles hit by cars (all released)
- 1 female adult bushbaby (Neve)
- 2 former pet juveniles (Riley and Mika)

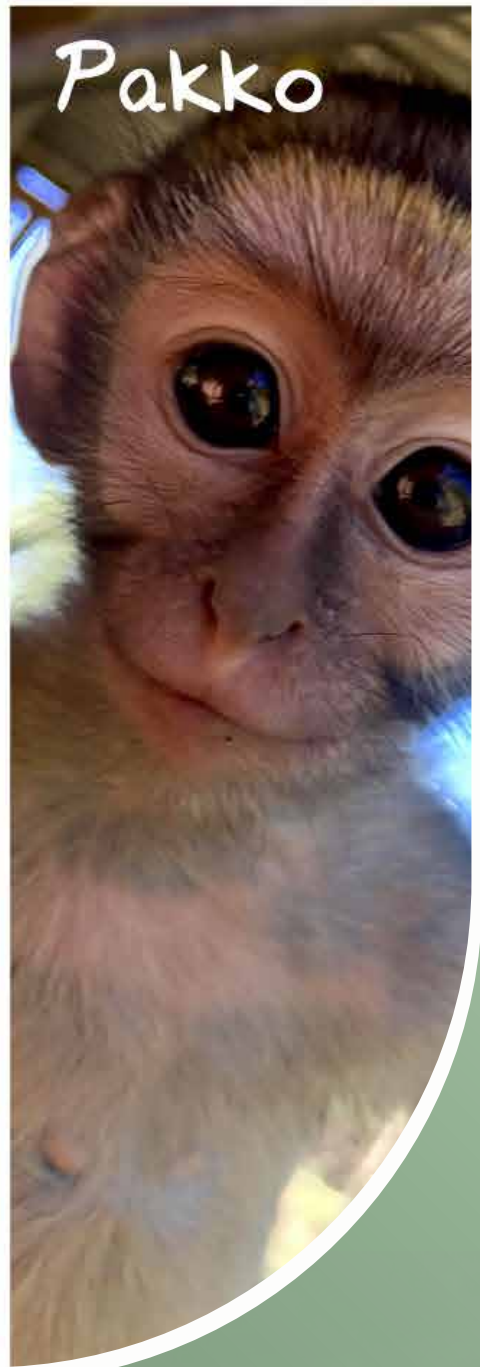
Bell arrived at the VMF in January, blind in both eyes. She was in intensive care in Disneyland for several months, where she befriended Red (he was there due to his broken arm). Bell learnt to associate a bell rung during feeding time to come and find her milk bottle (hence her name). Due to Bell's blindness, it would be difficult for her to use the feeding cage so instead she was fed by hand when ringing the bell. This way, she was able to bond with an experienced foster mum Shasta who has raised blind orphans before. End of May, Leelo arrived, a juvenile girl of 18 months who is partially sighted, there were no details of how this happened. Leelo was introduced to Cuddy who has some brain damage from being hit by a car. They bonded very quickly and both spent some time in a smaller area first so we could see her development and so Leelo felt safe. After the new blinds enclosure Calypso's Corner was built, Cuddy and Leelo were introduced to Shasta, Bell and Jay-Bee and they were accepted in the little troop.



Rene



Yllena



Pakko



Bell and Red

Releases

Whenever possible and appropriate, the VMF releases wild monkeys back to their own troops after recovering. When wild monkeys are brought to the VMF, we record the day, time and location they were found so that the team can eventually return to find the family troop.

We are unable to release orphans back to their troop as they require their mother's milk to survive. Unfortunately, ex-pets are also unreleasable as they have no wild troops after so many years living in captivity.

In 2019, the team was able to release 4 injured vervets back to their wild troops after they recovered. One of them was Micki, a one year old girl. In June she was found next to a road just outside of Tzaneen with a concussion, presumably being hit by a car. She recovered quickly and showed no signs of permanent damage. Urbanus, Herbie and Nemo, all boys between one and two years, had similar backgrounds and were able to recover due to the hard work of the sickbay team. All four were reunited happily with their families back in the wild.

Monkeys that are unable to be released are kept onsite and are integrated into social groups. These onsite troops allow monkeys to form social bonds and live in spacious enclosures with indigenous bush. The VMF is currently working towards the Vervet Forest, to one day release rehabilitated troops into a much larger, protected, indigenous forest.



Micki



Urbanus



Herbie

Foster Mums

The VMF foster mum programme is well-established, enabling vervet orphans to live in indigenous bush, simulating their natural habitat surrounded by electrified fencing. They live with groups of up to 50 monkeys and from as young as 3 months old. As early as 6 weeks old, the orphans have no human interaction after they have learnt how to use the milk feeding cage, all the care is given from monkey foster mums. This ensures the least possible trauma for the orphan and ensures they form close bonds within the troop from an early age maintaining their inherent fear of humans once in a troop.

The foster mum programme continued in 2019, enabling 25 orphans to live a more natural life in 10 troops (Goliath, Engeltjie, Skrow, James, Dino & Daniel, Global, SAAV, Koko, Gismo, Robert and Calypso's Corner. This year Robert troop was used for the first time as part of the foster mum programme. We did lose one orphan Dixie shortly after she went out into the troop with her foster mum. There was a fight between males where she sustained severe injuries that couldn't recover despite all the efforts and care from the team.

Rehabilitating orphans this young into social troops enables them to maintain their inherent fear of people and ensures the best possible outcome for them to live in a wilder state.



Mrs. Gold
and Foxy



Kate and
Dougie



Shasta
and Bell

Integration

32 monkeys were successfully integrated into social groups.

- 25 orphans were successfully integrated with foster mums in 10 enclosures.
- Pedro and Harmony were integrated in Holt and Barrington Enclosure.
- Leelo joined Calypso's Corner the new area for the blinds.
- Cedric was integrated into Gismo Troop and Suzie already started meeting the Gismo monkeys.
- Zea joined Mango and Jesse in JALamango Enclosure
- Spiegel was reunited in with Global troop in the new more secure enclosure.
- Skrow Troop welcomed ex-Pet Riley and greeted ex-pet Mika with no doubt of her integration in the coming year

The foundation integrates individual monkeys into social groups for their own benefit, as social enrichment is necessary for primates. With troop integrations, the single monkey gets acquainted with the troop through a large introduction cage on the side of the enclosure, monitored closely by the integration team. Once the monkey is confident with individuals in the group, they are released into the troop. The team continues to monitor the monkey until they demonstrate that they are comfortable within the troop.



Riley



Spiegel



Harmony

Veterinarians

In 2019 the VMF welcomed back American Veterinarian Dr. Cheryl Chooljian, DVM for the vasectomy season in August / September. Cheryl completed 18 vasectomies and 1 enucleation (eye removal), as well as autopsies from several of our deceased monkeys. Cheryl gave a presentation on parasites and helped some of the VMF team with parasite detection for the troop monkeys. Volunteer Natacha Berthon helped with osteopathy on several monkeys to improve their mobility and help various conditions. In addition to the routine procedures, a number of monkeys required local veterinary intervention:

- Django arrived with a broken arm, Red with a broken clavicle upon arrival. Both are now living in Global troop with good mobility.
- Pongo had a puncture wound in the chest after fights in the troop. He had stitches and healed up quickly.
- Marcel arrived with a swollen jaw after being shot. Later, x-rays revealed a severe bone infection with no chance of recovery as his bone structure had deteriorated too far trying to live so long in the wild.

Several monkeys passed away after chronic ill health. The most prominent one has been Forrest Gump, who arrived deaf with some brain damage but lived successfully in D&D troop for many years. This year, the initial trauma from his youth caught up with him and his mobility reduced rapidly and his bones started fusing. He passed away surrounded by the people who loved and cared for him.



Dr Cheryl
vasectomising
Jesse



Natacha
performing
osteopathy



Django

Heatstroke

The year 2019 has been a year of climate protests with a lot of medial attention to the climate crisis. Here, at the VMF, we have faced climate change first hand with severe droughts, longer dry periods and less rainfall. 2019 has been the worst so far, with temperatures in October above 40 degree Celcius for consecutive days.

On 28th October, tragedy struck, the air temperature during more than one hour raised up to an abnormal 53 degrees celcius, with a hot breeze, as if you would be trapped in a oven with a fan on. Due to dry season (which is considered winter in South Africa), there was no green foliage to keep it cool due to the severe drought. Despite shelter and access to fresh water, several monkeys passed out and convulsed with heat exhaustion and severely overheated within minutes. Although the team, including local staff, voluntary staff and volunteers, did everything possible, we lost 21 monkeys that day or the following day with healthy males in their prime years being most effected. We were able to save four in non-stop critical care working around the clock: Emma from Engeltjie, Mischief from Global troop, Zardo from Koko troop, and Cedric from Gismo troop who are all doing fantastic now.

As a contingency plan, we have built even more shelters, we are going to plant evergreen trees in troops next year to provide natural shelter, all troops and intro cages have additional salt and rehydration when the temp reaches above 35C and are even more closely monitored with a special shift all day.



New Robert shelter



Mischief after recovery back in troop

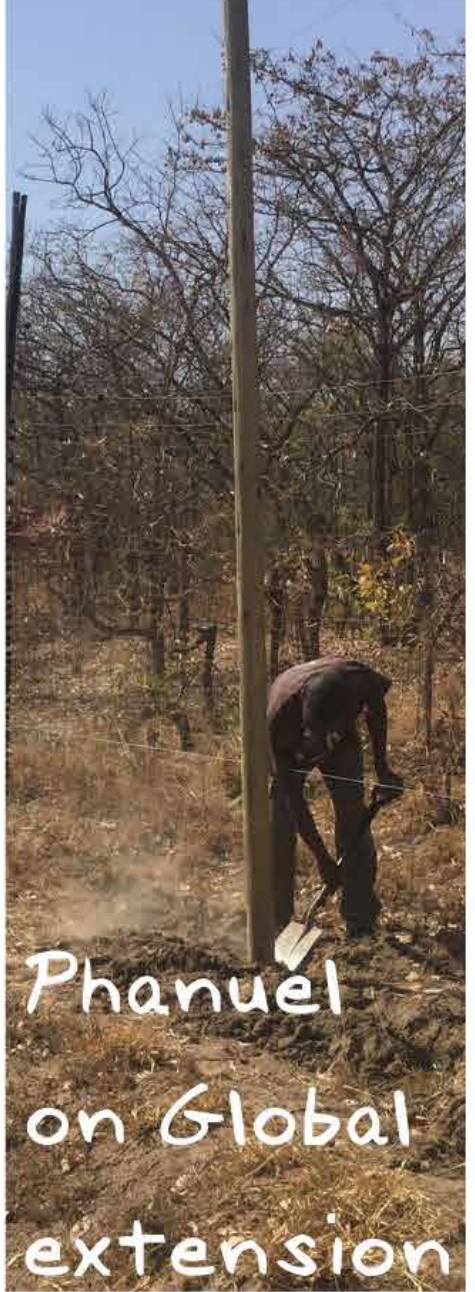
Maintenance

Our local staff and volunteer team kept very busy with building and maintenance onsite. We welcomed our first maintenance voluntary staff to assist our local team with expansion projects. Some of our projects include:

- Completion of new toilets and showers in Volunteer Village
- Moved around several introcages between troops
- Added one new cabin in Staff Village
- Massive Lantana eradication around troop enclosures
- Large increase in number of shelters for enclosures
- Construction of JALamango Samango Enclosure
- Calypso's Corner for the blind monkeys built
- Sickbay Enclosure enlarged and renamed to Global Work and Travel (Global for short)
- New tunnel in between D&D introcages installed
- Sunshine outdoor cages built and connected to Sickbay
- Start construction of new Main feed area
- Start construction of a new shower block at Education Center
- Drilled a bore hole 145m deep to extract water from the underground, hence securing additional water supply for the foundation



Shasta, Bell and Cuddy
in Calypso's Corner



Phanuel
on Global
extension



Tom at
Samango's



Drilling
team Van Eck

Staff and Interns

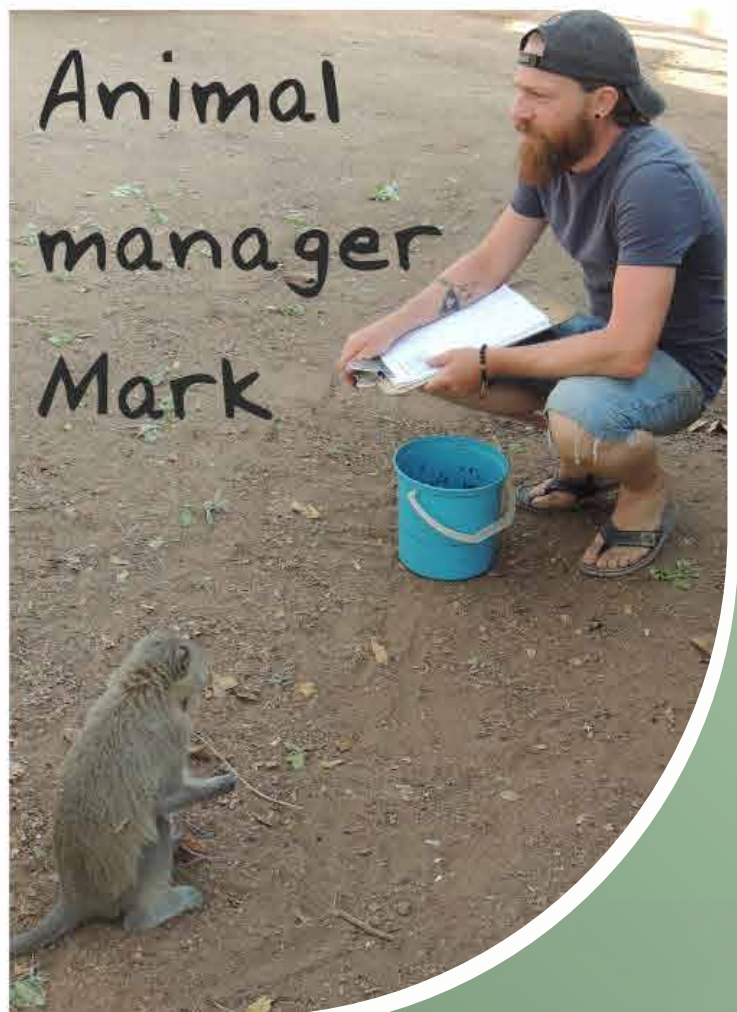
In 2019, the VMF took on a larger voluntary staff team, enabling the foundation to get more done. Enormous thanks to all of our local and voluntary staff and interns.

Due to challenges with visas, we appointed 5 voluntary staff for short-term. We also hired 7 new long-term voluntary staff. 10 of the 12 staff positions were filled with returning volunteers or interns.

- Mauro Strumendo (Vegan chef), Emma Debersaques (Meds), Julie de Boeck (Meds and sickbay), Bob Bertholon (Vegan chef), Oliver Gold (top section temporary staff). New long term voluntary staff are Jamie Holyer (Vegan chef), Laura Quinn (Sickbay), Stephanie Buekenhoudt (Middle section staff) Ellie Pandolfi (Baby mum), Noam Benyuones (Meds and critical care), Hadrien Favre (Maintenance and driver), Mark Ashcroft (Animal Manager).
- Hana Bruger was promoted to Sanctuary Manager.
- From 7 interns, 2 were returning volunteers, helping in the areas for section work, baby care and integration.
-

We continued to incorporate training sessions for staff and interns in each monthly staff meeting. The staff also received a first aid training, Megan, Hana and Sami accomplished first aid course level II.

Our Local Staff team continued to be led by the ever-smiling Local Staff Manager Innocent Mahuwa who has awarded his learners' licenses and will soon start driving himself.



Volunteering

The VMF believes in ethical volunteering and aims to continue developing the volunteer experience at the foundation. Thank you to all the ethical volunteering organisations ensuring there are always people to help the VMF continue its work.

133 volunteers arrived at the VMF in 2019 from 18 different countries, the top five being from France, Germany, UK, USA and Belgium. 45% of volunteers booked directly through VMF and at peak season we housed 42 volunteers, with several extending their stay. An additional 24 volunteers have returned or are returning (12 for staff and intern positions).

We continue offering short-term volunteering (from 1/2 day-3 days) with great success. 5 short-term volunteers were able to experience life at the foundation and assist with daily care giving activities.

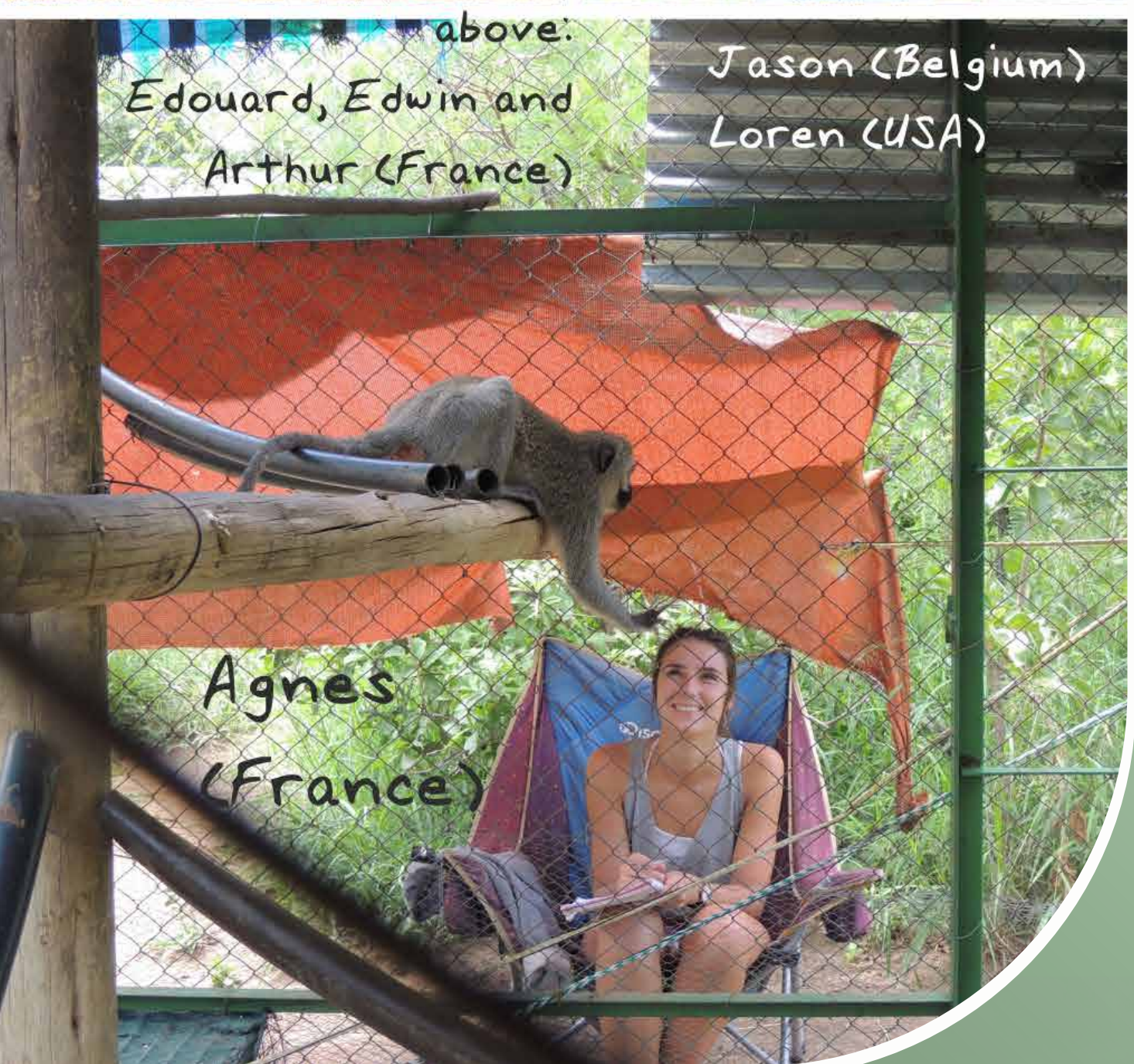
The building of new showers and toilets in the Volunteer village improved the hygiene and convenience for volunteers.



above:

Edouard, Edwin and
Arthur (France)

Jason (Belgium)
Loren (USA)



Agnes
(France)

Visitors

200 local and international visitors arrived for guided tours to learn about the monkeys (this was a 63% increase in numbers from the previous year). CARE, a baboon sanctuary nearby also visited with a couple of volunteers on a few occasions.

An intern researcher arrived to take some non-invasive hair samples from the monkeys to create a South African field guide photo book of hair follicles from different species.

Security

Fires - in 2019 we back burned the perimeter in order to prevent bush fires reaching the foundation - with success.

Security – there was one instance of petty theft and break-ins in 2019 (lower than the previous year). One was prevented by local staff Sydwell's night patrol. The VMF has installed panic buttons in addition to the alarms that are already there. These buttons work all across the foundation to ensure continued safety of the team and the foundation. The alarm system is strictly tested every month.

Timmy and George (Dave's dogs) continue to act as watch and guard dogs along with local staff on night patrol to keep staff and volunteers safe.



Media

It has been a fantastic year for the VMF concerning media outreach. The year started good with the Podcast Talking Animals with Duncan Strauss featuring Dave on January 9th. The American radio podcast talked not only about the monkeys and the rehabilitation progress, but also about veganism and volunteering opportunities.

Shortly after, on February 4th, Josie discussed with Carole Davies-MacIntosh the Vervet Forest project as a returning guest on the Canadian podcast Animal Voices Vancouver, followed by the Animals Today Radio show on February 27th.

Another big project throughout the year was the filming for the new Channel 4 series Work on the Wild Side. Waddell Media sent their film crew on a number of occasions to film Josie and Mark's work at the sanctuary along with a couple of other staff members to highlight the work of the VMF, following closely the stories of Bell, the Samangoes and orphan Dobby. We will announce time of airing when confirmed.

Thanks to the Unbound Project, three articles were published in British magazines (My Weekly, Woman & Home magazine, Vegan Food & Living), exploring Josie's animal advocacy work with the monkeys and her dedication to make a difference in their lives.

In mid November, just before baby season, the Letaba Herald, a local newspaper published an article about monkeys as neighbours. It gave a very good overview of how to live peacefully with monkeys in your neighbourhood.



Waddell Media
for Channel 4



Dave on
podcast

Vervet Forest

The Vervet Forest is becoming more well-known around the globe and continues to attract support for the foundation and the Vervet Forest vision.

In 2019 we had 7 documentary screenings which is less than the year before due to the demand of streaming possibilities. For next year, we will look into other options.

Vervet Forest Director, Kyle Salazar began the third season of the Vervet Forest Youtube Series before returning back to his home country USA. A big thank you to Kyle for his phenomenal work in supporting the VMF's vision, gaining a large following for the VMF and for helping the Vervet Forest vision grow.

The Youtube series, however, continues with all staff and volunteers collecting footage and editing by Hadrien Favre with Dave's soothing voice for the voiceover - with great feedback.

As of December 31st, 27 individuals and organisations raised 1,000 GBP for one hectare of forest, earning themselves a brick on our Vervet Forest Wall and there was a large increase in the number of monthly donors.



Stephanie with Hilde
and her teacher



Lynn, Hilde



Vervet Forest Screening at
HELHa university

Education

In May we received complaints from a High School in Polokwane, that monkeys get into the classrooms and that they attack children for their food during lunch break. Upon further investigation by Rentia it was clear the problem was left-over food on the playground and around the school. Once students and staff stopped feeding the monkeys, including not leaving food out, picking up litter, making bins monkey proof, and closing doors and windows, the issue was quickly resolved.

Towards the end of our winter we were invited to talk at the Mosaic Education Centre in Polokwane. As part of their curriculum wildlife as a theme, it was an honour and joy to teach these children about monkeys and how to live with them in harmony. We have also received a generous donation of hot water bottles, blankets, water bowls, unsalted seeds and nuts.

This year there were also two visits to schools in Belgium, where a presentation was given and the Vervet Forest movie screened. In one of the schools VMF had a stand where merchandise was sold. After a presentation in another school, the students organized a Christmas fundraiser for the VMF.

The VMF education program reaches far beyond the ordinary classroom. Pamphlets are distributed not only in Tzaneen and Polokwane but as far as Pretoria, Johannesburg, Hoedspruit, Letsitele and they can even be found in the Kruger National Park. The local SPCA also helps us out in this regard and have some in their bookshop in town.



Out reach

2019 was a busy year in regard of outreach programs. The first event we participated was in Johannesburg at Casalinga Italian Restaurant/Venue. At their charity event they raised money for different animal organisations through food and gift stalls as well as live music from famous bands like Arno Carstens, Ard Matthews, The Parlotones. The VMF also attended Paws for Love in Johannesburg area.

The Magoebaskloof Farmstall is a local cafe in Magoebaskloof Mountains where they now sell VMF merchandise in their shop and hand out VMF pamphlets with a great outreach. The owners share VMF's love for vervets as well as samango monkeys who are living high up in the tree canopies above the shop.

Two vegan food stalls were ran, the first being at the Annual Ebenezer mile, the second a food stall at the very first Magoeba Plunge Marathon organised by the Rotary Club. It is extremely important to be involved with local public events, not only for education purposes but it also helps get visitors to the sanctuary, food donations from farmers and notifications about monkeys kept illegally as pets.

Our last event for the year was at the Eiland Holiday Resort just outside of Letsitele. This talk meant VMF reached a large community of farmers, - the orphan babies primarily comes from farms where they are often shot. They had plenty of questions on how to live in harmony with monkeys, about monkey behaviour and the role monkeys play in agriculture and nature.



Eiland presentation



Magoebaskloof
Farm Stall



Foodstall

European Events

2019 was a good year when it comes to European Events. Hilde Olbrechts (VMF Europe Events Co-ordinator) was mostly responsible for the VMF participating in 17 vegan events including Belgium, Germany, Ireland, The Netherlands, Spain (for the first time) and Luxembourg. The VMF has been able to rely on a small team of volunteers to help with these events. Most of the events were a success when looking at sales of merchandise and attracting volunteers. We also reached out to quite a lot of potential volunteers of which some have already been in contact with the VMF to enquire or to book their stay. The events have been an essential part of spreading awareness across Europe and encouraging people to get involved.

GERMANY

- 12/01 TierrechtsTag/TierbefreiungsTag (Bochum)
- 20/01 Veganer Mitbring-Brunch (Frankfurt)
- 08/06 Vegan Street Days (Stuttgart)
- 03/08 Vegan Street Days (Dortmund)

IRELAND

- 14/04 Irish Vegan Festival (Belfast)

LUXEMBOURG

- 5-8/09 IARC 2019 (Esch-sur-Alzette)

NETHERLANDS

- 25/03 Vervet Forest Screening (Amsterdam)

SPAIN

- 25/05 Vervet Forest Screening & Animal event, with guest speakers from Sea Shepherd & Playa Patrol (Mijas Costa)



Emma, Julie, Hilde



Lynn, Karin



Ann,
Tessa



Evelynne

UK Events

VMF Event co-ordinator Shellie Robinson organised 7 stalls at vegan events with several former volunteers and staff helping out, Mark and Josh even running stalls themselves. The success speaks for itself. Laura Quinn hasn't just been won as volunteer who extended her stay multiple times, but also returned as sickbay staff.

UK

- 23/02 Vegan Fest Horsham (Horsham)
- 26/02 Vegan crepe party (Hackney, London)
- 26&27/10 Vegfest (London)
- 02/11 Vegan Winterfest (Manchester)
- 17/11 Vegan Festival (Brighton)
- 01/12 Vegan Winter Festival (Portsmouth)
- 08/12 Animal Aid's Christmas (London)

A big thank you to Shellie and Hilde for their support! Both work full-time jobs and organise events in the UK and in Europe in their free time as voluntary help.

Josh



Rest in Power William Laurent

William Laurent arrived at the VMF as Vegan chef in December 2017 for one year. As a professional and extremely talented fine dining chef, he impressed everyone who tasted one of his incredible creations - especially his seitan. Word of his talent spread with each local food stall he served at, creating a demand for the first VMF public cooking class.

During the Unbound Project, Will taught local school cooks to prepare 100% plant-based dishes. Will charmed the cooks with his humor, skills, compassion for animals all whilst embracing their traditions and cultures. Even though his cooking was the attribute which was most obvious, Will's gentle but driven nature with high integrity entwined with his calm character proved him to be a valued and loved member of the VMF team. Will enjoyed nature, running and went for long hikes as often as he could in his free time. When on site, he was most often found in the milks cabin, preparing the baby milk for orphaned babies.

Will's deep love for animals showed when screening documentaries to promote the vegan lifestyle, but also raising awareness for habitat loss and the unseen miracles in the sea where he lived for a year helping Sea Shepherd. He made himself a name for his big love of mullets and bananagram, which he would play often.

Our friend and much loved colleague Will passed away on 1st April 2019, just 30 years young. We thank Will for his unstoppable compassion and activism for animals along with his drive to make the world go vegan.



Fundraising

2019 was a good year, with several fundraiser throughout the year, including William Laurent's vegan crepe party in London. After his passing, Edward Sharp (middle section), Aisa Coco Perez (bottom section), Nico le Franc (integration), Tracey Grey (integration) and Megan Stark (sanctuary manager) participated in the Magoebaskloof Farm Run in July 2019 raising one hectare of land for the Vervet Forest in Will's memory.

Renier Grobler created a new File Maker Pro database for the VMF according to the sanctuary's needs - thank you!

Grants



Gratefully we received a grant towards general funds from International Primate Protection League (IPPL). 5000 US-Dollar were granted to be used where needed. This gave us the opportunity to drill a bore hole to extract water from the underground to secure our water supply, covering most of the costs through this donation. IPPL has been a great supporter in the previous year, when contributing towards our new office building. Thank you, IPPL.



Ed, Meg, Aisa,
Tracey and Nico



Tracey



by Will

PASA/GFAS

VMF has been an active member of Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA) since February 2006. The PASA code of conduct requires all members and staff to exhibit:

a) a concern for the primates, b) integrity, c) transparency, d) fairness, e) conscientiousness, f) professionalism, g) personal and institutional commitment to conservation.

The VMF was represented at the 2019 Community Engagement Workshop hosted by Lion Rock - Big Cat Sanctuary in the Free State by Dave Du Toit and Hana Bruger in November.

After the workshop, Kaitlyn Bock, Africa Operation Manager, visited the VMF with her friend Katie Dyke for two days and was impressed with the dedication of staff, workers and volunteers.

The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) is dedicated to the sole purpose of strengthening and supporting the work of animal sanctuaries, rescues, and rehabilitation centers worldwide. In October 2015, the VMF was the first in Africa to be accredited.

VMF would like to thank PASA for providing such informative and inspiring workshops and GFAS for providing standards for legitimate animal sanctuaries.



The Year Ahead

The team is eager to continue with many of our new projects from 2019 and has big plans for 2020:

- Begin fundraising for the Skunkey Critical Care Unit
- Continue working towards the Vervet Forest project
- Plant 40 evergreen trees to improve shelter for the monkeys in dry season
- Continue Main Feed storage and prep area
- Continue and expand outreach and education programme
- Increase number of volunteers throughout the year
- Strengthen social media appearance
- Finish building a new toilet and shower for private cabins
- Redo all water piping for more effective water transportation and utilise bore hole for extracting water from the underground to secure water for the foundation
- Profiling Camelot troop
- Rebuild Skunkey enclosure fencing for more security
- Paint volunteer kitchen at the cottage
- Continue integration of Mika to Skrow troop, and Suzie's to Gismo troop along with additional integrations.

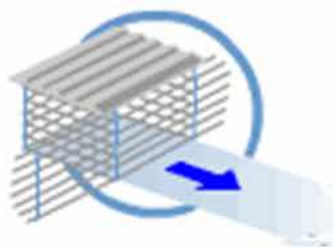


Karla and Dobby



Vervet Monkey Foundation

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